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ABSTRACT

This document reports on a study to determine differential attitudes of experienced and inexperienced teachers toward supervision and evaluation. The basic hypothesis was that experienced teachers would have significantly different attitudes toward the concepts of supervision and evaluation than would inexperienced interns. A sample of 100 teachers, 50 in each group, was sent a survey instrument to determine their actual experiences with supervision and evaluation and their attitudes toward preferred practices. Little difference was found between the groups. Both groups favored items from the supervisory category over items in evaluation, although both groups recognized the importance of some of the characteristics of evaluation. A lack of uniformity in the data, however, made it difficult to draw conclusions that were supported by the evidence. While the tendency of both groups to prefer supervisory activities over evaluative is interesting, the inability of experienced teachers to select ideal components of an evaluation program is troublesome. Teachers need to develop consensus on what makes a good supervisory program. The Supervision Attitude Inventory may need further scrutiny and editing before valid conclusions can be drawn. (IW)

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EXPERIENCED AND INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

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EXPERIENCED AND INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

Abstract

The concepts of supervision of instruction and teacher evaluation were studied from the perspective of experienced and inexperienced teachers. A sample of 100 teachers, 50 in each group, was sent a survey instrument to determine their actual experiences with supervision and evaluation and their attitude toward preferred practices. Little difference was found between the groups. Both tended to identify supervisory practices as more acceptable than evaluative with inexperienced teachers more favorable in both categories. Experienced teachers had difficulty with defining an ideal program of professional review.

EXPERIENCED AND INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

The concepts of supervision of instruction and teacher evaluation are developing separate identities in the profession of education. Supervision, often referred to as "formative evaluation," is defined in this study to be interactions and support systems developed to identify professional development needs for teachers and to plan measures to meet the identified needs to help teachers improve. Evaluation, for this study, is the same concept as "summative evaluation." That is, evaluation is a determination of the worth or value of an individual to an organization.

Background

The Wisconsin Improvement Program is a consortium of seventeen teacher preparation institutions in Wisconsin working together toward the improvement of teaching and teacher education. One of the programs of this consortium is a teacher internship for teachers in preparation on the member campuses. Selected students are placed in an intensive internship position in schools throughout the state as the final experience for permanent licensure. Interns are given the responsibility for a partial teaching assignment and are paid by the local school system.

Each intern is observed by a campus supervisor and one or more school-based cooperating teachers. Often the feedback interns receive is more evaluative than supportive due to the nature of their assignment.

Design of the Study

A sample of 50 interns and 50 cooperating teachers was selected in the spring of 1984 to respond to a survey instrument to measure attitudes toward characteristics of supervision and evaluation. Six statements outlining supervisory task and six statements identifying evaluative tasks were generated by the researchers. Respondents were to rate their agreement on a five-point Likert-type scale for their real experiences with supervision and evaluation, and, on a second scale, for their attitudes about an ideal program.

In addition, a set of five semantic differential descriptors was designed as part of the survey. These descriptors were selected to reflect a component of supervision on one pole and a component of evaluation on the opposite pole.

Demographic data requested included the number of years experience (this value would be zero for interns--the inexperienced group), teaching level, experience in different schools, experience with different principals, and level of preparation. Respondents were also asked to share their comments regarding their attitudes about instructional supervision.

Results

A total of 70 responses, 36 interns, and 34 cooperating teachers, were received. The first step in the analysis of the data was a measure of internal consistancy of the items. A coefficient alpha was generated from all responses to both the real and the ideal scale for the two categories of items. The coefficient for the supervision item was 0.901 and the coefficient for the evaluation items was 0.790. Thus both scales were judged to be reliable for the twelve items in the survey.

The basic hypothesis of this study was that experienced cooperating teachers would have significantly different attitudes toward the concepts of supervision and evaluation than would the inexperienced interns. Of the 34 teachers responding only two had five or fewer years of experience. Five teachers had from six to ten years in teaching, fifteen had between ten and twenty years and twelve had over twenty years of experience. Thus the majority (79.4%) of the cooperating teachers did have over ten years of teaching experience.

Table 1 is a list of the items from the Supervision Attitude Inventory. The items are keyed as to whether they represent an evaluation activity or a supervision activity. Tables that follow will refer to the items by the numbers assigned in Table 1.

Table 1. Items from the Supervision Attitude Inventory and their Categories

Item (Supervision. . .)	Category
1. Matches my teaching performance against a set standard.	1. Evaluation
2. Identifies my teaching behaviors that I was unaware of.	2. Supervision
3. Identifies sources to help with my personal and professional growth.	3. Supervision
4. Identifies my positive and/or negative teaching characteristics and evidence of each.	4. Evaluation
5. Sets performance objectives for my teaching to be measured for completion at a future date.	5. Evaluation
6. Encourages collegial approaches to instructional problem-solving.	6. Supervision
7. Is improvement oriented.	7. Supervision
8. Is value oriented.	8. Evaluation

9.	Gives me an idea of how I compare to other teachers.	9. Evaluation
10.	Promotes experimentation with new techniques.	10. Supervision
11.	Assists on working with curriculum development.	11. Supervision
12.	Focuses on my process in completing a prescribed curriculum.	12. Evaluation

Two-sample t-tests were used to determined significant differences in the mean responses comparing interns to cooperating teachers, and also comparing each group's ideal and real attitudes. The scale score values for the response varied from 1=strongly agree to 5=strongly disagree with the middle value 3=uncertain. Group means also were tested to determine any significant difference from the scale score value "3". A significant difference would indicate either agreement or disagreement with the item under consideration.

Table 2 is a list of the t-values found to be significant when testing group means for a difference from the value 3. The statements of the items can be found by checking the corresponding item number in Table 1.

Table 2. Item means, standard deviations and t-values of significant items for each group.

Interns

Item	mean	s.d.	t	sig.
1(real)	2.33	0.86	-4.64	.00
2(real)	2.03	0.94	-6.20	.00
2(ideal)	2.08	2.17	-2.54	.05
3(real)	2.28	1.68	-2.57	.05
3(ideal)	2.17	2.17	-2.30	.05
4(real)	2.22	1.66	-2.81	.01
4(ideal)	1.72	1.85	-4.15	.00
6(real)	2.63	0.89	-2.41	.05
7(real)	1.64	0.83	-9.80	.00
8(real)	2.17	0.91	-5.49	.00
10(real)	2.00	1.04	-5.76	.00
10(ideal)	1.81	1.83	-3.91	.00
11(real)	2.53	1.13	-2.50	.05
11(ideal)	2.17	1.84	-2.71	.01

Teachers

Item	mean	s.d.	t	sig.
2(real)	2.53	0.99	-2.77	.01

4(real)	2.38	1.48	-2.44	.05
7(real)	2.18	1.06	-4.54	.00
9(real)	3.62	1.58	2.28	.05
10(real)	2.47	1.21	-2.55	.05

Interns agreed significantly with nine items (1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11) on the real scale and with five items (2, 3, 4, 10, and 11) on the ideal scale. None of the mean values for interns were greater than 3, indicating an agreement with all items. Six of the intern significant items were supervision items on the real scale, and three were evaluation. Four of the ideal items for interns were supervision and one was evaluation.

Teachers agreed with four statements (2, 4, 7, and 10) on the real scale and they disagreed with statement #9 on the same scale. None of the teacher average responses on the ideal scale were significantly different than the scale value of "3".

Comparing the real scale with the ideal scale for interns did not produce any significant differences. Only one item for the teachers generated a difference, item #9. The mean value from the real scale was 3.62 and from the ideal scale was 2.65 generating a t-value of 2.30 significant at the .05 level. Thus the teachers disagreed that this item was actually occuring, but they agreed that they would like to see it happen. Item #9 is an evaluation item.

When comparing intern responses to cooperating teachers, four items showed a significant difference. These are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Significant t-tests between teachers and interns.

Item	Intern mean	Teacher mean	t	sig.
1(real)	2.33	3.38	-2.72	.01
2(real)	2.03	2.53	-2.17	.05
6(real)	2.63	3.44	-2.40	.05
7(real)	1.64	2.18	-2.35	.05

All four items showing a significant difference between teachers and interns were on the real scale. Means for Items #2 and #7 were on the "agree" side of the scale for both groups. Teacher response to items #1 and #6 were on the "disagree" side of the scale, and intern response feel on the "agree" side. Item #1 was an evaluation item. The other three items (2, 6, and 7) were supervision items.

The five semantic differential items were designed with seven possible positions between words for responses. The scale value of "4" represented the neutral position for these items.

A t-test measuring significant differences for group means from the value "4" resulted in teachers and interns consistently selecting the

supervision descriptor over the evaluation descriptor. When comparing groups there were no significant differences between teachers and interns for these items. The descriptors and their categories are give in Table 4.

Table 4. Semantic differential descriptors.

Supervision	Evaluation
stimulate	deter
encourage	limit
discuss	tell
examine	judge
support	restrict

Discussion

The interns in this study felt that they were receiving both supervisory help and evaluation of their work. There were more items from the supervision category, indicating an actual experience with the supportive, non-judgmental approach. the one evaluative item that interns identified as a preferred practice dealt with the identification and substantiation of positive and negative teaching characteristics. Otherwise, the interns viewed the ideal interaction with a supervisor to be in the supportive role. Responses to the semantic differential items supported this view.

Teachers identified supervisory items as actual experience, with the exception of the same teaching characteristics item that the interns selected from the evaluation category. There were no items, supervisory or evaluative, that the teachers could agree upon as ideal. Teachers did show significant disagreement on the technique of comparison to their peers as an actual occurrence, but they tended to agree (though not significantly) that this would be an acceptable procedure.

Thus both groups tend to favor items from the supervisory category over items in evaluation. Both groups do recognize, however, an importance in some of the characteristics of evaluation. The two items where there was a meaningful difference of opinion were from each category. Interns agreed that their evaluations matched their performance to a set standard and teachers disagreed. Interns also agreed that their supervision encouraged a collegial approach to problem solving and teachers disagreed with this as well.

Both groups were strongly in favor of supervision that would stimulate, encourage, discuss, examine, and support. They were not in favor of an interaction that would deter, limit, tell, judge, or restrain. The nature of the words in this differential section of the instrument may have led these responses.

Conclusions

The lack of uniformity in the data make it difficult to draw conclusions that are supported by the evidence. The hypothesis that these two groups would display significantly different attitude about supervision and evaluation cannot be supported. Only four items showed a significant difference for the two groups, and only two of these four showed a meaningful difference--one in supervision and one in evaluation. This is not conclusive evidence.

The tendency of both groups to support supervisory activities over evaluative is interesting, but the inability of the experienced teachers to select ideal components of a program for review of their work is troublesome. Teachers, it would seem, need to develop consensus on what it takes to make a good supervisory program.

The Supervision Attitude Inventory also may need scrutiny. While the first run reliability coefficients were high, subsequent administrations should be conducted to verify these statistics. Items may be in need of editing as well.

In sum, this project was a good beginning in determining differential attitudes of experienced and inexperienced teachers toward supervision and evaluation. More work is necessary before any valid conclusions can be drawn.